REMARKS

Amendments to the Specification

Applicants have amended typos in paragraphs [0009] and [0018] of the present specification. In paragraph 9, "In" has been changed to "is" in line 9. In paragraph 18, "200" has been changed to "300" in line 3.

Objection to the Claims

Applicants have amended claims 1, 4, 6, 9, 11, 14, 16, and 19 according to the examiner's objections.

Rejection of the Claims

The examiner rejected presently pending claims 1-3, 6-8, 11-13, and 16-18 under 35 U.S.C. §102 (b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,740,438 to Ratcliff et al. ("Ratcliff").

The examiner stated:
Ratcliff et al. also discloses sending multiple requests from the channel adapter to the fabric with each request being sent on behalf of a respective partition (See column 5 lines 24-41 of Ratcliff et al. for reference to partitions of the processing system 11 sending initialization commands, which are address requests, to the host to network interface 67, with an initialization command being sent on behalf of each partition respectively). Ratcliff et al. further discloses assigning a unique address identification to each partition for each request, storing the address identifications in a table in the fabric, and returning the assigned address identification for each request with multiple addresses being assigned to the same channel adapter.

With reference to column 5, lines 24-41, referenced by the examiner, Ratcliff states:

Conventionally, an application program within a partition initiating communications across a network will present various initialization commands to the processing system. These commands are detected by the appropriate IBM 3172 by means of an associated device address included within the commands that the IBM 3172 recognizes. As is well known, the device address identifies both the application sending the commands and the partition that the application is executing in.

Lines 24-32.

Hence, Ratcliff does not teach or suggest sending address requests because the initialization commands already include a device address. As explained by Ratcliff in the above excerpt, these addresses are detected by the IBM 3172 and are used to identify the application and the partition. Therefore, an address assignment is not necessary in Ratcliff because the communication paths are already established through use of device addresses. Ratcliff's environment is different than the one described in the present application because the present invention is directed to establishing a usable address so that communications can begin. See, among other paragraphs, paragraph [0015] of the present application, which includes the following explanation: "Once the address for partition 102 is established, communication by, for instance, a controller to that particular partition 102 may be effected by communicating with the partition's assigned address." [Emphasis Added] See also, paragraph [0011] which includes: "when the N_Port sends the FDISC ELS to the fabric the FDISC provides following functions: . . . It provides a signal to the fabric to validate and assign the virtual N_Ports' new N_Port ID, and allows both the fabric and the virtual N_Port to begin normal frame reception and transmission." [Emphasis added]

The Ratcliff excerpt continues as follows:

The device address accompanies all network communications commands sent by an application including initialization commands.

Col.5, lines 35-37

Therefore, according to Ratcliff, <u>an initialization command cannot be an address request</u> because the command already includes the device address. Ratcliff consistently describes communications, such as sending initialization commands, that are already taking place through use of addresses. Applicants have inspected Ratcliff and found that Ratcliff nowhere describes or suggests sending requests for addresses to be established in order that communications can begin, for example, between a controller and a partition, or between a fabric and a channel adapter.

Applicants have amended each of the independent claims 1, 6, 11, and 16 to recite that requests for addresses to be assigned to respective partitions are sent so that communications can be effected by use of the address assigned in response to the address request. As explained above, these limitations are nowhere taught or suggested by Ratcliff. Because the independent claims as amended are now considered by applicants to be allowable, the dependent claims are also allowable because the supporting prior art patents to Lioy and Kanemaki also do not teach these features of the present invention, as the examiner recognized.

CONCLUSION

Applicants have properly accommodated each of the examiner's grounds for rejection, as explained above. Applicant submits that the present application is now in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner has any questions or believes further discussion will aid examination and advance prosecution of the application, a telephone call to the undersigned is invited.

Respectfully submitted,

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